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**Technology & Economic Development  
Committee**

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**HB 2866**

**Brief Description:** Establishing a joint select committee to investigate the creation of a Washington state council for the Pacific Northwest economic region.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Johnson, Tarleton, Chandler, Moscoso, Buys, Van Werven, Manweller, Haler and Stanford.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Establishes a joint select committee on the creation of a Washington state council for the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (Committee).
- Requires the Committee to meet a total of five or six times in 2016.
- Requires staff support for the Committee to be provided by Senate Committee Services and the Office of Program Research.
- Requires the Committee to report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature by December 31, 2016.
- Establishes an expiration date of December 31, 2016.

**Hearing Date:** 2/2/16

**Staff:** Nikkole Hughes (786-7156).

**Background:**

Pacific Northwest Economic Region.

The Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) was established in 1991 by statute in the organization's seven original jurisdictions: Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Alaska, and the Canadian provinces of Alberta and British Columbia. The purpose of the PNWER is to develop and establish policies that:

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- promote greater regional collaboration;
- enhance the economic competitiveness of the region;
- increase the economic well-being of all citizens in the region; and
- improve the quality of life of the citizens of the Pacific Northwest.

Each state and province participating in the PNWER appoints its own delegation to a delegate council, consisting of four legislators and the governor or governor's designee from each state and four representatives and the premier or the premier's designee from each province. The PNWER is governed by an executive committee consisting of one legislator from each participating state or province who is a member of the delegate council and four of the seven governors or premiers or their designees.

**Summary of Bill:**

A legislative joint select committee on the creation of a Washington state council for the PNWER is established (Committee). The President of the Senate must appoint two members from each of the two largest caucuses of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives must appoint two members from each of the two largest caucuses of the House. The Committee must choose its chair from among its membership.

The purpose of the Committee is to review the costs and benefits associated with creating a Washington state council for the PNWER. The Committee must investigate possible pathways to expand regional partnerships on certain issues, including:

- sewage treatment and disposal by Victoria, British Columbia;
- workforce and professional license reciprocity;
- international trade agreements; and
- the establishment of regular joint cabinet meetings between regional entities.

The Committee must meet a total of five or six times in 2016, with three or four meetings taking place in certain cities in Washington, one meeting taking place with counterparts in British Columbia, and one meeting taking place with the PNWER delegates from the other states in the Pacific Northwest.

An advisory committee of stakeholders must be created by the Committee and appointed by the Committee chair to assist in the development of recommendations. Recommendations and findings of the Committee must be reported to the appropriate Legislative committees by December 31, 2016.

The expenses of the Committee must be paid jointly by the Senate and the House of Representatives. Staff support for the Committee must be provided by Senate Committee Services and the Office of Program Research.

The bill expires December 31, 2016.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.